

New schools open in Mushahidah

By Sgt. Cheryl Cox
1-1 Cav. Public Affairs

MUSHAHIDAH, Iraq - It has been said that fostering education is one of many steps toward improving safety and stability for Iraq's future-its children.

The Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment helped the city of Mushahidah, Iraq, get one step closer to this goal by opening three new schools within the city Jan 15.

The Soldiers assisted with opening a girl's elementary school, a girl's secondary school and a boy's elementary school.

"This project is an example of the close partnership we have with the Mushahidah city council to create a secure, safe and stable environment in Mushahidah," said Capt. Adrian Spevak, the Co. B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment commander and a



(Photo by Sgt. Cheryl Cox, 1-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Staff Sgt. Riley Smallwood, a native of Griffen, Ga., and member of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment and a native of Griffen, Ga., plays with young children Jan. 15 outside the newest girls and boys school in Mushahidah, Iraq.

native of Allentown, Pa., during the ribbon cutting ceremony for the girls' schools. "It is an honor and privilege to be here for the ceremony, and I

look forward to continuing our close relationship with future projects."

Just as Spevak said he was excited to see the children have

a new place to go to school, the Mushahidah city council members said they were also very

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Military Training Team starts to see hard work with Iraqi Army paying off

By Spc. Shea Butler
7th MPAD

BAKARIYA, Iraq -The military training teams have worked hard to teach the Iraqi's to run operations with little help from coalition forces, and there efforts are starting to pay off.

Iraqi troops from 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Division searched homes and fields in Bakariya Jan.17.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat

Team, 1st Cavalry Division provided outer cordon while the 136th Military Training Team supervised the Iraqi operations on the ground.

The mission was planned by the Iraqis. They made all the calls on the ground and used mostly their own intelligence to complete the mission, said the 136 MTT team chief, Maj. Ken Carlson, a native of Long Beach, Calif.

"In 10 months of working with this particular battalion of Iraqi soldiers we have watched them grow," said Sgt. 1st

Class David Jenkins, a native of Newnan, Ga., with 136 MTT. "We have gone from driving all of their missions to just tagging along, because they are running things without much help from us."

The military training teams have an important role in turning Iraq over to the control of Iraqis. They are teaching them to handle problems on their own.

"We are here as advisors to the (Iraqi Army) so they can run things for them-

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Pilots recognized for stopping rocket attack

By Sgt. Robert Strain
1st ACB Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - The Multi-National Force-Iraq's senior noncommissioned officer visited the troops here to recognize the efforts of several of the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Air Cavalry Brigade's AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter pilots Jan. 19.

Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Mellinger recognized four pilots from 1st "First Attack" Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, who destroyed several rocket tubes near a northeastern neighborhood of Baghdad in November.

The pilots were Chief Warrant Officer 4 William Ham, a standardization instructor pilot; Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steve Kilgore, the brigade's master aviation gunner; Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark Villanueva and 1st Lt. R. Smith Griggs, who are both pilots with Company B.

While returning to Camp Taji after an aerial patrol mission, the four pilots witnessed several rockets being fired from rocket tubes near Sadr City.

According to Villanueva, the pilots relayed what they saw to their headquarters and the ground units in the area, and received clearance to fire on the rocket



(Photo by Sgt. Robert Strain, 1st ACB Public Affairs)

Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Mellinger, the Multi-National Force-Iraq senior noncommissioned officer, left, presents a coin to Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark Villanueva, as 1st Lt. R. Smith Griggs, and Chief Warrant Officer 4 William Ham look on Jan. 19 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

tubes. They destroyed the tubes and were also able to kill several of the insurgents involved.

Mellinger presented three of the pilots with coins in recognition of their work in that incident. The fourth pilot, Kilgore, is attending a conference at Fort Rucker, Ala., and will receive his coin when he

returns.

"There are a couple groups of Soldiers that have definitely earned their keep over here, and they are the [military police] and aviators," Mellinger said.

After presenting coins to the pilots, Mellinger wrapped up his visit by touring the brigade's area of operation.

Arabic Phrase
of the Day
shubbaak

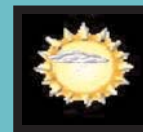
Defined:
window

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 62
Low: 40



Tomorrow

High: 64
Low: 40



Thursday

High: 64
Low: 39

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Baghdad in Brief

Off duty IA soldier tips off troops to insurgent suspects

KALSU, Iraq - Multi-National Division - Baghdad troops detained two suspected insurgents during operations in southern Baghdad Jan. 19.

Paratroopers from the, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Divisions seized the suspects in a search of vehicles after a tip from an off duty Iraqi Army soldier.

The suspects are being held for further questioning.

Joint operation nets two suspects, weapons caches

KALSU, Iraq - A joint operation south of Baghdad by Iraqi policemen and American paratroopers uncovered weapon caches and detained two insurgents Jan. 18.

Iraqi police from Tahrir and Musayyib teamed up with paratroopers from the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment to recover three 120mm mortar rounds and detain two suspected insurgents wanted on an IP arrest warrant for criminal activities.

The suspects are being held for further questioning.

Troops detain three after discovering roadside bomb

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LOYALTY, Iraq - Multi-National Division - Baghdad troops seized three suspected terrorists following the discovery of a roadside bomb Jan. 19 in eastern Baghdad.

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry discovered an anti-tank mine in the road while on patrol.

Following a controlled detonation of the device, three suspicious individuals were seen walking away from the mine site. The three were detained.

The suspects are being held for questioning.



(Photo by Spc. Shea Butler, 7th MPAD)

Sgt. 1st Class David Jenkins, a native of Newnan, Ga., with the 136th Military Training Team, gives a pop quiz to an Iraqi soldier at forward observation base Champion after a training session Jan.17.

Soldiers see IA training paying off

MiTT

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selves," Jenkins said.

Part of the Iraqis being able to conduct missions successfully on their own is Iraqi leadership.

The army has grown leaps and bounds since the start of the war, but their weakness is a not having strong noncommissioned officer corps, Carlson said. "We are teaching them about what it means to be an NCO and how important it is."

They are not lacking leadership completely though. They do have some strong officers, Carlson said.

The Iraqi's 1st Bn., 3rd Bde., 6th Div.,

commander Lt. Col Jaber uses tough love and it works to get things done, Carlson said.

"I watched him today as his Soldiers were getting tired and trying to retreat to their vehicles," he said.

"The mission wasn't complete yet and he wasn't ready to go home until it was, so he got over the radio and screamed. Magically many soldiers appeared out of thin air and were ready to finish the mission," he added.

They were able to complete the mission. Nothing significant was found but nobody was hurt and they were able to communicate with the locals, so it was still successful, Carlson said.

Cav troopers help open three new schools

Schools

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excited.

"This is a great example for the projects in this area," said Shiek Naif Moutlak, the chief of the city council. "We thank the coalition for all they have done and hope for other projects in the area to help the people."

And helping people is what makes all the hard work worth while.

"We have been working for six months to get the school to a good standard for the kids," said Capt. John McGowan, the Company C, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion commander and a native of Birmingham, Ala. "By working with the Iraqi government, we have made a better place for the students to go to school."

While the council members and the Soldiers celebrated the ribbon cutting, McGowan had chance to talk to a few people at the school.

"By being here talking to the students, I know that they are very happy to have a better place to go school," he contin-



(Photo by Sgt. Cheryl Cox, 1-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

With the assistance of a young student, Capt. Adrian Spevak, the commander of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment and a native of Allentown, Pa., cuts a ribbon during an opening ceremony of a new school in Mushahidah, Iraq Jan. 15.

ued. "And the teachers are happy to have a good place to go to work and teach from."

The newly opened schools are a great improvement from the old schools the children were attending, according to McGowan.

"The children now have

classrooms with new desks and unbroken windows," said McGowan.


"They also have new school supplies that they may not have had without the help of the coalition partnership," he added.

Before leaving the girl's


secondary school, Spevak stepped into one of the classrooms to talk to the students.


"I am honored to be here to help make this school a better place," he told the girls. "It is definitely a privilege to look into the eyes of tomorrow's leaders in Iraq."





**OPERATION IRAQI
FREEDOM**





Stop before you act, don't rush into a situation or mission without considering the risks against the benefits.

Think about what you are about to do, what is the right way to safely accomplish the task.

Observe the situation and surrounding environment. What are the Risks? How can I reduce them?

Plan. Develop your plan to reduce the risks and decide how to best implement the plan.

Proceed with Safety. Supervise continuously and Constantly look for ways to improve.

Guard troop finds family in Army brethren

By Spc. Shea Butler
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - A young southern man waits patiently for the clock to read 5 p.m.. Then he gathers his belongings and heads home to see his wife and children after a long day of supervising an assembly line for a large all-terrain vehicle corporation.

Sgt. Jimmy Weeks Jr., a native of Manning, S.C., with 151st Field Artillery Brigade, South Carolina Army National Guard has a different job this year.

He left his civilian job to do his part in Operation Iraqi Freedom after his unit was activated. Now, he is working in the Iraqi security forces cell in the division headquarters at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Weeks can be found on the phone tracking Iraqi forces on the battle field or preparing power point slides for the commanding general.

"I do a lot of power point presentations for our chain of command so that everyone knows the progress and placement of Iraqi forces on the battlefield," Weeks said.

Weeks is used to keeping track of other people. He has two very active little boys and a loving wife waiting for him in South Carolina. His oldest son is seven and his youngest is almost two, he said.

"My wife called the other day and I could hear the baby in the back ground just screaming," Weeks said. "Don't get me

wrong, I miss my kids a lot, but on the bright side I am missing the terrible two stage. I will leave it to my wife to whip him in to shape before I get him."

Not only does he miss his family but he misses and appreciates the whole essence of home.

"I am an outdoors person and there is just so much to do during the summer," he said.

His stomach is ready to go back to his home state too.

"I am looking forward to family barbecues again. I miss my mom's mashed potatoes and my wife's fried chicken," Weeks said.

Weeks was fortunate enough to bring some of his closest friends with him on this deployment which makes things easier. "I miss home but I brought a piece of home with me. Some of my best friends are in my unit," he said.

Weeks has been in the same unit for seven years so he has gotten to know his comrades very well, he said.

"There are four of us guys here who were all friends in the rear. We all came here as specialists, and we all got promoted to sergeants since being here," Weeks said. "We all hang out together playing ball and stuff."

When he and his buddies aren't working they can be found on the basketball court, at the gym or watching movies.

"My roommate has all the seasons of



(Photo by Spc. Shea Butler, 7th MPAD)

Sgt. Jimmy Weeks Jr. receives his combat patch from Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil Jr., Multi-National Division - Baghdad commanding general.

'Sanford and Son' so we watch an episode just about every day," he said.

Weeks and his battle buddies are working hard and using one another to remind each other of home, he said.

Instead of looking forward to five o'clock, this time he is looking forward to October when he can gather his gear and head home to his wife and kids after a long years work.

TELEVISION



| | 8:00p.m. | 8:30p.m. | 9:00p.m. | 9:30p.m. | 10:00p.m. | 10:30p.m. | 11:00p.m. |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------|---------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| AFN sports | Sports Center | | The Best Damn Sports Show Period | | ESPNews | ESPNews | Australian Open Tennis Championship |
| AFN prime ATLANTIC | Headline News | ATS/Regional News | Heroes | | American Dad | War at Home | Supernatural |
| AFN news | MSNBC Live | | MSNBC Live | | Fox News Live | | Studio B |